

Rudolf Steiner School of Ann Arbor Plan for Transition to More Normal School Operations

March 2021

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Looking ahead into the 2021-22 School Year we are confident that at some point, maybe when school resumes in September, maybe later in the school year, we will be able to reduce our COVID-19 mitigation efforts and move towards a more conventional school structure and atmosphere. Our experience of this pandemic is that the understanding of what is best for personal safety has changed and developed over the months of experience, and we anticipate that the guidance will change as such a time draws nearer. This is our first published full plan for a transition from Low-Density instruction to normal classroom procedures, emphasizing community member safety, and we will continue to update it as best practices become clearer.

The school is committed to continuing our in-person instruction with a focus on returning to normal as wisely as possible, balancing the need for COVID-19 safety with the need for healthy school activities and a full curriculum. We are currently referring to this mode of operation (less restrictive than this school year, but not fully back to normal operations) as Limited Gatherings mode. It is also important to note that this transition might not be a straight line, but instead a series of adaptations to developing community situations. With the full knowledge that no one can clearly predict how this will go, this plan is our first comprehensive outlining of our plan for this coming transition.

It is also likely that there are small areas of this plan that might be implemented even while the conditions to support the full implementation of the mode are not yet occurring in the wider South Eastern Michigan community. This is particularly true in the areas of outdoor school events and outdoor field trips, where conditions might well be favorable in May and June. The College will make the decision about the implementation of subsections of this plan.

[Overview of Limited Gatherings Mode](#)

The full details of the Limited Gatherings Mode are laid out in this document, but here is a quick summary:

- Early Childhood Classes
 - Each class will be taught as a whole group, rather than in pods.
 - Separate classes will not be allowed to play together outside.
 - Separate classes will not gather inside for festivals, puppet plays or other events.
 - Students in Kindergarten classes will wear masks inside until the recommendation from the State Licensing Board and the CDC is that they are no longer necessary.
- Grades One to Eight
 - Each class will be taught as a whole group, rather than in pods.
 - The Seventh and Eighth Grades will return to the Lower School Campus.
 - Students will be masked inside until the recommendations from the State Department of Education and the CDC is that they are no longer necessary.
 - Grades will not mix at all inside (no performances) and only mix outside with masks on.
 - Subject faculty will generally travel between classes and most subject classes will take place in the grade classroom rather than in the specialist rooms.
- High School
 - Each class will be taught as a whole group, rather than in pods.
 - Students will be masked inside until the recommendations from the State Department of Education and the CDC is that they are no longer necessary.

- Students from different grades will be mixed for Math, World Language and Music classes with social distancing and masks.
- Students from different grades will not mix in non-classroom environments inside (not at breaks and lunch) and only mix outside when masked.
- Flexible Classroom Link Program
 - We will determine if we offer our Flexible Classroom Link and Early Childhood Homeschool Support Programs on a semester-by-semester basis. Essentially, we will offer our Flexible Classroom Link Program whenever we are in a Low-Density (pod based with higher risk of community transmission) period, full details are in the document below.
 - We will offer a limited remote program in the case of any class quarantines due to COVID-19 exposure even if we are not offering the parallel remote program at that time.
- Curriculum Impacts
 - Movement classes will continue to take place outside only in the fall with a goal to move inside as the school year continues. The curriculum will begin to include more collaborative and group games.
 - Singing will return to the curriculum in grade groups while masked and with enhanced ventilation (windows and doors open). High School Choir will take place in grade level groups until masks are no longer recommended indoors.
 - The full range of instruments will return to our Instrumental Music program with appropriate precautions for blown instruments including enhanced ventilation, expanded social distancing, the use of masks designed for use during instrument playing, and appropriate bell covers for certain instruments.
 - Eurhythm will return to the curriculum, likely as blocks in the Lower School and within the Main Lesson curriculum in the High School.
 - We will be working to return field trips and overnight trips to the curriculum as possible – starting with field trips limited to a single class. This will be worked out closer to the events, but it is an important part of our school curriculum and experience and one we need to return to as soon as it can be wisely and safely done.
- Practical Matters
 - We will restart afterschool sports but will make decisions about what seems wise closer to the seasons as we move through the school year.
 - Afterschool opportunities such as clubs at the High School will be available, but decisions about whether they will be in person or remote will be made closer to the transition to the new phase.
 - A limited outdoor aftercare care program will be offered on the Lower School campus, with masks and fully outdoors.
 - The High School afterschool support program will be offered from 3:30 – 4:30 pm.
 - In-person in-door performances and events with audiences will not be possible during the Limited Gatherings phase of operations.
 - In-person outdoor events may be possible during this mode of operation as long as there is mask wearing and classes of students are separate – this may include some parent meetings (at the teacher’s discretion) and some festivals.

Limited Gatherings Safety and Health Protocols

We anticipate that the first step towards a return to our conventional settings and structure will be the return to full classes of students, rather than a pod set-up. We will then implement the following approaches to COVID-19 mitigation.

Limited Gatherings Safety and Health Protocols: Class Size and Structure

In a Limited Gathering setting we will return to our normal size classes from the Early Childhood program to the High School. At each level this will be different as we meet the needs of a wide age range of students:

Early Childhood – each class will return to a maximum size of 12 in our pre-kindergarten program and 18 in our mixed-age kindergarten classes. The classes will stay separated from each other so students will only have daily contact with the students in their direct class. Each class will have a dedicated lead teacher along with two classroom assistants. Students will be dropped off to their class (either in the parking lot or at the classroom door – to be determined as the time approaches) and will not move through the hallways during the day. The Golden Eagle program will continue to be offered in the individual classrooms as students will not be able to come together in this phase.

Grade One to Grade Eight – each class will return to being together in one room. All classes, Grade One to Eight, will be on the Lower School campus. They will stay separated from other grades, so students will only have daily contact with the students in their direct class. Class Teachers will only teach their class. Subject faculty will return to traveling between classrooms so that the full curriculum can be offered, although it is likely that we will schedule this differently, with potentially longer periods to reduce exposure time to possible COVID-19. Students will primarily stay in one room with Subject Teachers coming to them rather than going to shared rooms, such as the Art or Handwork room. Desks will be arranged in the classroom to maximize the space between students and allow as much social distancing as possible but is likely to be under six feet due to room size. We will not return to teaching practices that encourage closeness and contact until this phase is complete.

High School – Students will return to the normal high school schedule of classes. This means that they will be in small groups of multi-grade students for Math, Language and Music classes, have single, full-grade classes for Main Lesson and afternoon subject classes, and split classes for Art and Movement. This will allow our conventional system of level-based class assignment for Math and World Language classes to resume. We will not restart large gatherings of students across multiple grades in this phase. Students will have limited movement around the building; however, they will eat in their grade classrooms and will not mix socially inside the building with other grades. Desks will be arranged in the classroom to maximize the space between students and allow as much social distancing as possible but is likely to be under six feet due to room size. We may need to continue to use the larger spaces of the commons and assembly hall for classrooms in this phase, with the full-grade classes taking place in the larger spaces and the smaller classes in the rest of the classrooms.

Limited Gatherings Safety and Health Protocols: Masks

In the Limited Gathering Phase, we will continue our current mask expectations across all programs. The following requirements for facial covering (masks that cover nose and mouth) will be in place:

- **Faculty and Staff:** All faculty and staff will always wear a facial covering (except when eating or drinking) when they are indoors on campus. Masks can be removed when in private offices with closed doors. Mask breaks can be taken when on campus, outside and at least ten feet from students or adults. Masks can be cloth, of cotton or other material that provides containment of aerosol droplets, or disposable, level-one grade surgical masks. RSSAA will provide masks to all faculty and staff who would like them provided, but employees are encouraged to decide what is the most comfortable for them individually and to be ready to wear them throughout the school day. RSSAA will provide N95 masks for any faculty and staff whose daily work takes them into contact with more than one pod of students (front desk staff, and High School teachers, for instance). Masks should be washed daily.
- **Grades 1 – 12 Students:** All students in Grades 1 to 12 will be expected to wear a face mask throughout the school day. Masks can be cloth or disposable, level-one grade surgical masks. Students are asked to provide their own mask, but RSSAA will have them available if a student forgets to bring one. Students will be asked to put their mask on before entering the building and to wear it throughout the day unless they are outside and at least six feet apart or eating or drinking at their assigned desk.
- **Early Childhood Students:** To follow the Health Department order and to honor the safety and wellbeing of classmates in our mixed-age classrooms, we will be asking that all children in our mixed-age Kindergarten classrooms (Redbirds, Bluebirds and Robins) wear masks while indoors, except for our two-year-olds. The two-year-olds in these classes will not be required to wear masks and we will help them transition to wearing one as they turn three years of age. We will not be asking Chickadees, our pre-kindergarten class, to wear masks. Early Childhood children will not be required to wear masks while outdoors, eating snack and lunch or resting. Our nests transition in and out of doors many times throughout the day and spend an average of 2-3 hours outdoors daily. Wearing masks during rest and nap time is strongly discouraged by medical professionals for children, and as such we will continue to place nap mats at least six feet apart from one another. We will continue to meet all LARA State Childcare Recommendations throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Limited Gatherings Safety and Health Protocols: Hygiene

Hand Hygiene

In this area we will continue as we have been since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. Students and teachers will be washing hands with soap and water, or using hand sanitizer, every two to three hours throughout the day. Every student will be asked to wash their hands or use hand sanitizer upon arrival at school and before and after eating.

If you prefer that your child use their own hand sanitizer, you may send one into the school with your child's full name labeled on it. If you chose to send hand sanitizer from home, it must contain at least 60% isopropyl alcohol per CDC recommendations.

We will ensure that each classroom is always fully stocked with tissues and paper towels.

Cleaning and Disinfecting

The school buildings will be cleaned every night using the recommended cleaning protocols during the time of COVID-19. We will be using child-safe and ecologically-friendly products that meet state and licensing guidelines. All high-touch surfaces and bathrooms will be cleaned throughout the day and any

shared spaces will be cleaned between groups of students. Common areas (sinks, bathrooms, doorknobs, table-tops, shared items, etc.) will be cleaned and sanitized at least twice daily.

In all our buildings, the water fountains will be turned off as they are high-touch surfaces that are hard to keep sufficiently clean. In the High School, the water bottle fillers will be accessible, and students will be able to fill their own bottles. In the Lower School, each room will continue to have filtered water available, and teachers will help with water bottle filling. We will be encouraging all students to bring water bottles to school for their personal use.

The air handling systems in all our buildings were enhanced in the summer of 2020 and fans will run throughout the school day in the Limited Gatherings Phase to ensure that there is an ample exchange of air. In addition, if weather conditions support it, windows in all our classrooms will be open daily.

At the Lower School, playground equipment will undergo routine, normal cleaning. Handheld sand toys are disinfected daily after use. Children will use indoor shoes to decrease the amount of dirt and germs from outdoors that enter the building. In all grades classes we have decreased the number of items in the room and are asking students to avoid using each other's supplies and equipment.

Across the school there are some supplies that need to be used by multiple students either on the same or different days. There are three ways that we are handling this:

- A. We have purchased additional supplies – such as glue sticks and scissors – so that students each have their own and the problem is removed.
- B. Things that are not used daily are washed and then stored for at least three days before being used again, removing a chance of transmission – cups for tea in the first grade, for instance.
- C. Alcohol wipes and sprays are used to clean the supplies between students – for instance math manipulatives are used by one child in a day, cleaned with alcohol, and then used by another child another day or later in the same day.

[Limited Gatherings Safety and Health Protocols: Access to the Buildings](#)

Access to the school buildings in Limited Gatherings will be limited to students, faculty, staff, and necessary service people. In general, parents, other family members, and delivery people will not be allowed in the building while school is in session. We will evaluate best pick-up and drop off arrangements (whether at the parking lot or an outside classroom door) as we move closer to this mode. At the teacher's discretion, parents and individual teachers will be able to meet (masked and physically distanced, or outside) after school and in the evening when needed. This does mean that parents can meet with a teacher, support a classroom activity with set-up or materials once school has closed for the day, or attend Parent-Teacher Conferences. These meetings should be used to facilitate needed teacher support, one-on-one meetings, and campus work, not large in-door meetings of parents or gatherings.

[Limited Gatherings Safety and Health Protocols: Screening of Students and Staff](#)

We will continue to use the ParentSquare app to screen all faculty, staff, and students for symptoms of COVID-19 daily. This means:

- **Faculty and Staff:** All faculty and staff are asked to complete a daily symptom check through a ParentSquare feature that will check on symptoms. EC faculty and staff are asked to check their

temperature at school each morning, Grade 1 – 12 faculty and staff may check their temperature at home each morning and complete the app before coming to campus.

- **Students in Early Childhood to Grade 12:** Families will be asked to monitor their children's daily symptoms and temperature and to keep children home whenever they exhibit symptoms of COVID-19 or have a temperature over 100.4 degrees. Parents and high school students will be asked to complete the ParentSquare form daily to meet this Department of Health requirement.

Limited Gatherings Safety and Health Protocols: Protocols for COVID-19 Cases

Illness at school: Teachers will monitor students for symptoms of COVID-19 throughout the day. If a student displays COVID-19 symptoms the teacher will call the front office and the parents will be called to pick up the student. A front office staff member will come to the classroom and escort the student to a comfortable but isolated place where he or she will be cared for while they wait for a parent to pick them up.

Staying home whenever ill: Parents will be asked to keep children home for any two COVID-19 symptoms or a fever of 100.4 and above and to consider seeking COVID-19 testing if symptoms continue. Faculty and staff are also being asked to stay home when they have any symptoms or a fever. Teachers will be ready to support students who are home with make-up work and flexibility.

Response to any positive tests in the community: We are working with the Washtenaw Health Department and following their directions for handling any positively-confirmed COVID-19 cases in our school community. This means the following:

- In the case of a positive COVID-19 case on either campus we will have a one day break from school on that campus to allow for the implementation of the following steps, and deep cleaning of the campus.
- Employees and parents are asked to inform both their level coordinator and the Washtenaw Health Department of any positive COVID-19 test or confirmed exposure to COVID-19. The Washtenaw Health Department and individual physicians will manage whether someone is asked to isolate for 14 days or not.
- Once we have confirmed a positive test in our school community with the Washtenaw Health Department, we will then participate in their COVID-19 track and trace process by providing contact information to the Washtenaw Health Department for anyone who has had proximity to a person with a positive COVID-19 test – for instance, the other students in a class. We anticipate that the Health Department will then ask those individuals to quarantine for 10 days. If a specific pod of students is quarantined, we will provide remote instruction to the pod during that time. If an individual child is quarantined, we will provide individual support and curriculum for that time, depending on the child's age and grade.
- We will inform the school community of any positive cases in students or employees and of anybody quarantining because of an out-of-school exposure in a general way as we currently do for other infectious diseases. The community will be informed that a student in a particular grade, or a faculty member who has had contact with specific grades, has had a positive COVID-19 test. We will not be identifying individuals by name as we wish to provide some personal privacy.

Website Tracking of School COVID-19 Data: We also keep full information about levels of quarantine students and employees, positive COVID-19 cases, and probable COVID-19 cases on our website at <https://www.steinerschool.org/our-families/covid-19-information.cfm> . We will continue this reporting during this phase of our COVID-19 response. The table lists the following:

- Data by campus (LS and HS) and by student and faculty.
- Numbers of students/employees who are quarantined in any particular week.
- Numbers of students/employees who have a positive COVID-19 test in any particular week.
- Numbers of students/employees who have a probable COVID-19 case in any particular week – “probable” is a health-department-defined term meaning that the person is waiting on a test but the doctor working with them is expecting a positive result.
- We update it daily, so it is completely current.
- Note that a single quarantined person appears in two weeks of data as the quarantine period is 10 days.
- Note that the probable cases will either resolve into Positive cases or disappear from the chart (when the result is negative).

[Limited Gatherings Safety and Health Protocols: Medically Vulnerable](#)

We are committed to working with medically vulnerable faculty, staff, and students. For faculty and staff, we will work to develop ways that individuals can continue to achieve their daily work while not being exposed to others unnecessarily. Students who cannot be on campus because of a specific health concern can continue to participate in school through our Flexible Classroom Link Program however we will not be offering a full remote program during this phase, instead working out the details and support for the few individual students who will need this in this phase. Please see details below.

Limited Gatherings Curriculum and Instruction Plans

The speed of transition between full COVID-19 mitigation efforts (currently in place in the school with pods, masks, and social distancing) and this Limited Gathering Phase will depend on when it is possible to move to this new level of precaution. If this is possible as school starts in September 2021, we will open school under the new guidelines. However, if we start school with pods then we will transition more slowly into the new structure, to avoid yo-yoing back and forth. This does mean that 7th and 8th grade students may have to move campuses as these changes are made throughout the school year, and this is one reason we will be conservative in making the changes.

Limited Gatherings Curriculum and Instruction Plans: Early Childhood Program

In a Limited Gatherings period of instruction that occurs directly after a Low-Density period we will keep the children in their pods for some time to ensure that the Limited Gatherings decision is reliable and will stay in place for some time to come. This is to avoid bouncing the youngest children back and forth from pods to full classes too many times over the year.

If we enter a Limited Gatherings period of instruction from a period of normally delivered school, we will ensure that the classes are kept separate throughout the day – with play and activities being held just within the class group. This will include scheduling the outdoor play to avoid classes mixing.

Once we are confident that Limited Gatherings will be ongoing, we will return to our normal class structure in single classrooms. School for the Early Childhood students will be relatively normal in Limited Gatherings, with the largest difference being that classes will not be mixed at recess, for performances such as puppet shows, or for festivals.

Limited Gatherings Curriculum and Instruction Plans: Grades One to Eight

In Limited Gatherings we will bring the pods back together into single classrooms. However, we will not be able to have those students come together into larger cross-grade groups. This will mean that mixing on the playground, for instance, will not be possible. During such times we will use this Limited Gatherings instruction plan.

Protocols will most likely be similar to Low-Density learning except each class will be together in one classroom rather than in separated pods. Special Subject teachers and other faculty/staff will travel between classes. We will create an appropriate schedule for this phase when it is closer to being realized.

We will be working towards restoring the full Middle School sports program in this mode but may phase that in over the first few months.

Limited Gatherings Curriculum and Instruction Plans: High School

In Limited Gatherings we will bring the full class of each High School grade back together and hold small mixed grade classes for Math, World Language and Music. Grades will not be able to gather in larger groups or attend multi-grade classes or performances.

In Limited Gatherings instruction periods, we will work with our normal High School schedule:

- **8:00 – 8:50** - Math and Language classes in small-group, mixed-grades based on progress in the subject – masked and in physically-distanced assigned desks.

- **8:55 – 9:45** - Math and Language classes in small-group, mixed-grades based on progress in the subject – masked and in physically-distanced assigned desks.
- **9:45 – 10:00** - Break – students will all need to be in Main Lesson classroom, or outside.
- **10:00 – 11:50** - Main Lesson in full-grade classes with masks and physically distanced.
- **11:55 – 1:45** - Lunch in grade groups in Main Lesson classroom and outside. Music classes in physically distanced and masked small groups.
- **1:45 – 2:25** - Afternoon classes by grade in Main Lesson classroom, art, and other rooms – including subjects, Art, Movement, Health, College Prep, etc.
- **2:30 – 3:10** - Afternoon classes by grade in Main Lesson classroom, art, and other rooms – including subjects, Art, Movement, Health, College Prep, etc.

Physical Space

Materials and books in all rooms will be reduced and stored, this includes outdoor sports equipment, library books and office supplies. We will not be using lockers during Limited Gatherings periods. Students will keep their coats, backpacks, and materials at their desks in their crates as much as possible rather than carrying them around the building. We will be cleaning and sanitizing all spaces used by more than one student in a day. We will ensure that each classroom is well ventilated and that all our water systems are touchless or have handwashing equipment at hand.

Special High School Curriculum Considerations

Instrumental and Vocal Music Curriculum: We will continue to work with advice about how best to handle curriculum areas that include exhalation as part of the activity of the class. We will share our plans in this area as we get closer to the implementation of this phase but know that we are committed to a full instrumental and Vocal Music curriculum and will return to these activities as soon as wise and practical. We anticipate the return of the full range of music instruments to our Instrumental Music curriculum and to singing classes with the exception of all-school choir.

Trips and Internships – 2021-22 School Year: The opportunity for students to move beyond the walls of the High School is an integral part of our program, and it was greatly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic in the 2020-21 school year. We are currently thinking the following for the next phase of response:

- **Internships – Grade 11:** We are currently planning on our current Grade 11 students completing their internships in the spring of 2021. The Grade 11 students in the 2021-22 school year can expect to have the opportunity to participate in internships in June 2022.
- **Trips – Grade 12:** We will make decisions on trips two to three months before the trip date. Whether or not the fall Maine Tidal Biology Trip is possible will depend on whether it is offered by the organizing school, on family comfort with transportation options, and on the level of COVID-19 in Michigan and Maine. We will make this decision in May of 2021. The Italy Trip is also something we very much hope to be able to do in spring of 2022 and are planning for. We will make a final decision on this trip in January of 2022.
- **Trips – Grades 9, 10:** We are currently planning for the spring 2022 trips for ninth and tenth graders – these trips might be reorganized and changed to accommodate changes in the organizations that host us and COVID-19 precautions, and High School Families will be kept fully

informed. We are also currently looking at ways to offer these trips in Spring 2021, for those students interested in participating.

- **Extracurricular Trips:** We are hoping to offer backpacking trips and Model United Nations in the 2021-22 School Year and will make those decisions approximately two months ahead of the possible trip.

Lab Classes: The science curriculum at RSSAA is phenomenological, and hands-on lab experiences are a critical part of our program. In the 2020-21 School Year we developed an approach to lab courses that we will generally continue in this Limited Gathering phase, although the lab will be for the entire class, not just one pod at a time.

- Students will be in their grades only.
- Students will wash their hands before and after lab activities.
- Students will be masked for all lab activities.
- Students will be wearing face shields or goggles for all lab activities.
- Students will be wearing disposable gloves for all lab activities.
- Students will have individually assigned lab coats for each week of the Chemistry blocks and they will be washed each weekend. Lab coats will be stored in the student's own lab area and not together.
- Students will be in pairs.
- Students will be encouraged to socially distance as much as possible, with an understanding that there will be moments when they will be closer than six feet to complete the lab.
- Each student pair will have their own equipment set of beakers, etc. for each lab, and the equipment will be cleaned between uses.
- All surfaces and taps, etc. will be sanitized regularly.
- All normal lab safety rules will also be followed.

Any parent or student who is not comfortable with participating in labs under these conditions will be allowed to opt-out of the lab. In the High School this will mean that they do not receive credit for the lab section of the course, and it will be removed entirely from a student's transcript rather than marked as no-credit. We do encourage families to choose to participate in lab if possible, as the labs directly support the Main Lesson presentations and learning.

Extracurricular Clubs: As we move into the Limited Gatherings phase of our COVID-19 response we will slowly start to offer our extracurricular activities at the High School.

- Yearbook Club – This club has always worked independently, and they are likely to stay online through Zoom for the beginning of the school year and have some occasional outside meetings. Can meet in person again regularly once masks and social distancing are no longer needed.
- Gardening and Bee Club - allowed to meet with masks, with an effort at maintaining 6-foot distancing, with a minimum of 2 adults per meeting. All other safety rules, as well as wearing masks, will be followed while handling bees.
- Hiking Club - allowed to do outdoor hikes with masks and 6-foot physical distancing while hiking and stopping with a maximum of 12 students per hike.
- Model UN – will start online through Zoom and transition to in person when possible.

As usual, a faculty member will be present at all club meetings. We do not anticipate starting school dances, including prom, until masks are no longer recommended for COVID-19 transmission reduction. See below, under operations, for information on our Sports Program. For clubs not listed above we will make the decision as the time approaches.

Limited Gatherings: Flexible Classroom Link Program and Early Childhood Homeschool Support Program

We will determine if we offer our Flexible Classroom Link and Early Childhood Homeschool Support Programs on a semester by semester basis. Essentially, we will offer our Flexible Classroom Link Program whenever we are in a Low-Density (pod based with higher risk of community transmission) period. We will use the following decision making rules.

- A. If we are in a Limited Gatherings mode for the first day of the 2021-22 School Year, we will not offer a Flexible Classroom Link Program for the 2021-22 School Year unless, as the year proceeds, we need to return to a Low-Density Instruction mode. If we need to return to a Low-Density Instruction mode, we will start our Flexible Classroom Link Program within one week of the transition from Limited Gatherings to Low-Density Instruction.
- B. If we start the 2021-22 School Year in Low-Density Instruction mode, we will offer our Flexible Classroom Link Program to all students from the first day of school to January 21 (the end of the first semester). If we have transitioned to the Limited Gatherings mode of instructional delivery before December 17th (last day of school before the Winter Break) we will then end our Flexible Classroom Link program on January 21, 2022 for all students in Grades 6 and above. This will provide plenty of time for students to transition and families to plan. Our Home School support program will continue throughout the 2021-22 school year for students in Early Childhood through Grade 5. This is to enable families to make decisions about the entire school year.
- C. If we start the 2021-22 School Year in Low-Density Instruction mode and are either continuing, or have returned to that phase, on December 17th, 2021, we will offer the Flexible Classroom Link program through the end of the 2021-22 School Year.

Note that this means that if we are start the year in the Limited Gatherings mode of operation, we will not offer a Flexible Classroom link program unless we enter a Low-Density (pods-based) period. The Flexible Classroom Link program, if necessary, will continue as it has been operating in the 2020-21 School Year. When the Flexible Classroom Link program comes to an end, we will continue to offer an alternative for any student who is still limited to being at home by the risk of COVID-19 transmission. This will be worked out individually.

Early Childhood Homeschool Support: Families would be encouraged to sign up for a Waldorf Home School curriculum and meet weekly with Angela Gladstone for support.

Grades One - Five Homeschool Support: Families would be encouraged to sign up for a Waldorf Home School curriculum, have weekly check ins with the Flexible Classroom Link Program Coordinator and monthly meetings with their Class Teacher.

Grades Six – Eight Flexible Classroom Link: We would offer streamed Main Lesson to all students in the Flexible Classroom Link program and small Zoom group Math, Language, Art, and other subject lessons. This would be worked out individually for each student.

High School Flexible Classroom Link: We would offer a full curriculum including all courses – some streamed (Main Lesson and subject lessons), others in small Zoom groups, and others individually.

These programs will be offered only if necessary, and only if we enter the school year in a Low-Density mode or have to transfer into one during the school year.

Limited Gatherings Mental and Social-Emotional Wellbeing

Limited Gatherings instruction will be much closer to our normal school operations than any of the other phases that we are likely to be in this school year. Students will be in full-size classes and will be processing the impact of the pandemic over the year. We will be attentive across the school, to the effect that this time has had on all of them – watching for increased anxiety, grief, and other mental health impacts of the challenges we have all faced.

Faculty and staff are also planning for how to support students returning from our Flexible Classroom Link and supported Home School programs as they re-enter the classroom in this new phase of operations. We will be coordinating with all families, but especially the families of children who have spent the past year (and more by the time we implement this plan) at home, to ensure that the natural anxiety caused by the pandemic and a return to a larger social group is met with care and thoughtfulness.

Limited Gatherings Operations

Limited Gatherings Operations: Communications and Learning Management System

There are three communication systems that we are using to ensure that everyone in the community is kept well informed. ParentSquare is the tool for the sending of posts to groups of families or the whole school. We also use ParentSquare for emergencies and notifications, such as snow days. The Learning Management System (LMS) is designed to support individual students in their classes and is currently being used across the High School. As we return to a more normal mode of curriculum delivery the High School faculty and staff will decide whether the LMS is a tool we wish to continue using with students. The Family Portal is where parents can manage their contact information, see financial statements, and access the school directory. More information on all three systems can be found on our [Family Resources webpage](#).

Limited Gatherings Operations: Making the transition between types of instruction

There may be times in the year where we need to move between the different modes of instruction (for instance from Low-Density to Limited Gatherings). This will not be a simple process as both campuses will need to be reconfigured, and the 7th and 8th grade students potentially moved between campuses. Depending on whether the transition is possible during a break, we will have between two and five days without school to make this transition possible. We will announce this upcoming change with plenty of time for teachers to provide work to be done from home, however, we will not offer a full remote program during the transition as all faculty and staff will be working each day to achieve the transition.

Limited Gatherings Operations: Extended Day – Before and Aftercare Programs

We will be offering a limited aftercare program in Limited Gatherings operations. This means:

Lower School Campus: We will offer an outdoor aftercare program at the start of this mode, with a goal to expand the program as COVID-19 risk diminishes. Families will need to be signed up (no drop-in) and all activities will take place outside.

High School Campus: We will have an open campus until 4:30 p.m. daily to allow students to meet in approved clubs, to meet with teachers, and to participate in our after-school student support program. Students will be required to be masked and socially distanced and working or meeting in a designated space.

On both campuses we will return to offering a full extended-day program once masking and social distancing is no longer recommended to mitigate possible COVID-19 transmission.

Limited Gatherings Operations: Athletics

Lower School Campus: We will evaluate the appropriateness of offering middle school sports on a season-by-season basis in this phase. This will partly depend on space use and whether the gym is required for use by classes. Our goal is to return to our normal sports program but the challenge of mixed grade groups in teams means that we cannot do this too quickly. Outside sports are likely to start before indoor ones.

High School Campus: We will evaluate the appropriateness of offering competitive high school sports on a season-by-season basis in this phase. Outdoor sports (soccer and cross country) will start before indoor sports (volleyball and basketball). We will also be limited in space if we need

to use the high school gym as a large classroom for one of the high school grades. We will make these decisions at least six weeks before each season to allow for family planning.

Limited Gatherings Operations: Food Service and Lunch

Although there are not concerns about COVID-19 being transmitted by food, or even on food containers, we do have concerns about the delivery of food to classrooms and students. Therefore, in the Early Childhood we have returned to our normal food program, including the participation by the children in preparation of food that will be fully cooked before consumption. This includes mixing and kneading of bread and chopping vegetables for the soup. Students will work in groups of two or three, wash hands before and after food preparation (as they always have), wear a mask for all food preparation (as they will be inside) and all food will be cooked thoroughly before being served.

At the Lower School we will not be offering any food service to the grade's classrooms during Limited Gatherings. This means no pizza and no bagels. Students will be asked to bring their own food for snack and lunch.

At the High School we will be offering our normal food service of delivered take-out food. Individually packaged, delivered food will be delivered to the classrooms each lunch period.

The additional challenge of lunch periods is that students need to be unmasked to eat. All students will be expected to physically distance during lunch and to eat in a timely manner, returning to wearing their mask as soon as they are finished eating. During the fall and spring, eating outside will be encouraged and windows opened in the classrooms.

In our regular school structure, there are a variety of times when families send food into school for distribution to classmates – such as birthdays and festivals. Reviewing all the resources we rely on for COVID-19 guidance, there is not a concern about the transmission of illness through food. Therefore, we are easing our rules about food from home to the following:

- a. The teacher responsible for the class must be aware that food is being sent to school at least a day ahead of the food's arrival – this is to avoid surprises that are harder to handle in this complicated time.
- b. Food should be commercially prepared or, if made at home, fully cooked (no raw food like veggies).
- c. Food should be sent in a sealed container and given to the teacher.
- d. The teacher will open and distribute the food to students after washing his/her hands, wearing gloves and a mask.
- e. All food in the grades will be eaten at student desks with physical distancing, or well-spaced at the communal table in the EC classrooms.

Limited Gatherings Operations: Events

During Limited Gatherings we will handle events in the following way:

Class Parent Meetings	Zoom unless a Class Teacher chooses to have an outside meeting
HS College Nights	Zoom
Fall Trips – 8 th Grade and Maine	Not yet decided, will depend on conditions as we get closer

Golden Eagle Meetings	Zoom
EC and Lower Grades Lantern Walk	Held outside in classroom groups during the school day, with option to move to the evening if gathering rules in Michigan allow it
Field Trips	Individually worked out depending on direct context of events
Plays and Performances	In the classroom and streamed for parents
Parent Teacher Conferences	In person with distancing and masking or Zoom – depending on both teacher and parent preference
Winter Festival	Changed to a remote program
Spiral of Light	Held during the day by classroom at the Lower School campus, not scheduled for High School campus
Activities after January 1, 2022	We will make decisions as we get closer to the time – it is simply too far away to know yet. We are planning for a variety of trips (including LS trips like Medieval Games, and HS trips like the Italy Trip), festivals and sports, but will know much more as the time gets closer

How Will These Decisions Be Made?

Overview of School Decision Making

At Rudolf Steiner School of Ann Arbor, we have a governance model that clearly delineates the way in which different bodies of the school take responsibility for decision making in various areas. Generally, as we implement this plan, they will make decisions in the following places:

- a) Curriculum Decisions at the class level – Made by Class or Subject Teachers with Carrying Group and faculty input – for instance: how specific blocks and subjects are taught within the boundaries of the RSSAA Scope and Sequence.
- b) Curriculum Decisions for a full level of the school – Made by the Level Carrying Group with level faculty input – for instance: how a specific subject or activity is brought to the students in multiple grades.
- c) Curriculum Decisions for the full school – Made by the College of Teachers with input by faculty and Carrying Groups at all levels – for instance: whether to continue a particular subject at this time or not. This includes decisions around trips and campus events.
- d) Health Policy Decisions at the class level – made by the Carrying Group and the Class Teacher collaboratively at the EC and Grades levels, made by the Carrying Group with core faculty input at the HS.
- e) Health Policy Decisions for a full level of the school – Made by the Level Carrying Group with level faculty input.
- f) Health Policy Decisions for the full school – Made by the College of Teachers and Board collaboratively.
- g) Personnel Decisions – Made by the Carrying Group at each level of the school.
- h) Financial and legal decisions – Made by the Board of Trustees.
- i) Major School decisions – Made by the College of Teachers and Board of Trustees – For instance Strategic Plan approval or Governance Model Updates.

Ongoing Commitment to Meeting all Rules and Regulations

We are committed to continuing to meet all laws and regulations that are put forth by the State of Michigan and relevant licensing and regulatory bodies. When a new regulation or order is released that exceeds our current standards, we will immediately decide how best to adjust school operations to meet the new expectations. We will then formally add that change to our school COVID-19 policies which means that if the law or regulation is cancelled it will continue to be enforced within the school until we have had time to discuss the change, decide which group should make the appropriate decision about whether to change our school policies, and to develop any new policies. This means that the school community will have certainty about what is in place day to day, as all policies will stay in place until we decide that it is appropriate to change them.

Decision Making Around Changes in School Instructional Mode

When a decision is needed around the school instructional mode it will be made as a collaborative decision of the Board of Trustees and the College of Teachers. These decisions will include making the decision to change our mode of operations – from Low-Density to Limited Gatherings, and the other way when necessary.

When community conditions indicate that a change in instructional mode is needed, or possible, the Board Executive Committee will consult and call a combined College, Board and Parent Council Leadership meeting within three days to consider what the appropriate response from the school should be. Decision making will be consensus based, as is usual in our decision making. The College and Board, with the support of the School Administrator, will gather all information needed to make a considered and prudent decision. The decision will then be implemented by the School Administrator and Level Coordinators. The recommendation to the Board Executive Committee for such a meeting can come from any of the following groups: HUB, College, COVID-19 Task Force, or Board. The COVID-19 Task Force will examine this question at every regular meeting to keep our awareness of whether the time has come to meet and make one of these decisions.

Criteria we will use for such decision making: We will make decisions about school modes using all the best advice and recommendations we can gather. Primary in this will be the Washtenaw County Health Department and Washtenaw Intermediate School District. The data we will examine will include rates of transmission in the county, cases in our student community, and rate of positive COVID-19 tests. We will be listening to parent and community feedback (concerns raised, requests from parents, or families moving to and from remote instruction). We also will be watching for any concerns around staffing the school, for instance if a significant number of teachers had to be quarantined. However, we are not setting indicators as we do not have this expertise and will instead be working with those that do in the community if this kind of decision is needed.

We are committed, across the school, to moving back to our regular mode of operations as soon as it can be wisely and safely done. Our goal is always to offer as complete a curriculum and as full a school experience as safely possible.

[Decision Making on Subparts of the Moving Towards More Normal School Plan](#)

Decisions that do not affect the modes of instruction for RSSAA will, as noted above, continue to be made in our regular governance structure, with an emphasis on timely and collaborative decision making that is communicated with the full community as quickly as possible. When a decision would be strengthened with parent input, it will be sought.